

Brahmachari Martin
Satsanga
Lake Shrine Temple
Thursday, April 19, 2012

This evening's service is a satsanga. Br. Martin said he'd be answering the questions that had been submitted. Also, that there must be spring in the air because the questions are all about love. So here we go! He hoped we wouldn't leave because we were asking the wrong guy but thankfully he had Master's teachings to refer to.

Question [you'll see why you're asking the wrong guy]: "I'm looking to connect with a true soul mate. I date men but the ones I do like, don't like me and the ones who like me, I feel no connection with. I would really like to get married to a man I can truly love. What do I do to attract a real soul mate?"

Answer: First off, Guruji said, "The world as a whole has forgotten the real meaning of the word love. What is love? Love has been so abused and crucified by man that very few people know what true love is." That's why it is such a minefield and very difficult. They are finding even in terms of human love that people don't have a clue, surprisingly! It used to be that compatibility was talked about. People would say that opposites attract and others would say that compatibility was upper most but then they found out it doesn't matter. In fact, you don't even have to like a person to fall in love.

This is what happens in India with the arranged marriage and they worked out great. Love grows in those marriages. Whereas in the West when someone says they love a person, get married, love declines. What are we talking about? This quality of love is a very strange one.

It used to be, like back in the days of Br. Martin's parents, that couples would get married for other reasons than romance. They'd want a breadwinner or a homemaker or children. Now a days, nobody needs any of that. If you can do it yourself, why get married? What has happened is that relationships have turned into this thing of soul mates or finding "the one" and all that? It's too much pressure, too many choices, too much pressure. It is very difficult!

The psychologist, Robert Epstein, is the editor of "Psychology Today". He wanted to prove that love could be palpated and that no matter who the people were they could create love. He met a woman on a plane and said: "Do you want to try this?" [A great pickup line interjected by Br. Martin.] "I want to do an experiment to see if we can fall in love. I know I'm a psychologist and know there are certain things that lead to love, like eye contact. We'll look at each other and talk about our vulnerabilities together.

Another one was affectionate touch, Br. Martin explained. They have found that by gazing into another's eyes will increase the affection for the other person 70%. So it's scientific. So he said: "Let's do this thing and see if we can fall in love." They did and they fell in love. It didn't go anywhere because she spoke a different language than he did. Maybe that's why it worked but it's interesting. It kind of shows this idea of the magic touch and love at first sight is not really what it's all about.

While jogging and listening to the radio Br. Martin heard another neat thing. He went on to say that he hears all kinds of love advice while jogging and while doing stuff like that but that most of it doesn't really make much sense, except for this one guy. This question usually comes from a woman but men have the same problem. They want to meet women and they have trouble, too. The guy said: "Don't try to meet woman. What you should do is be successful."

Be the best at what you love to do. That will attract other people. It creates a magnetism. It's a gene thing, too, because women are definitely looking for security and someone to take care of them and all that. It is built into their genes but is true that rather than going after a person, cultivate and develop yourself. If you're a man, be successful; a woman should cultivate her spirituality. Then you become magnetically attractive rather than chasing somebody, which repels the other person. It does work that way. If you're a man, be successful. Make a lot of money to attract a girlfriend.

It's a minefield. It is not supposed to run like it is. We're applying the wrong rules to this whole playground here on earth. We're here to love God. We forget why we've come here. We forget and think we're here to love another person and that it's all going to be wonderful. Then it blows up! That is because we're here to love God. When we love God, the right person will come to us that we can spend our life with. When God is first, then it works out. When God isn't, it's all disaster.

We can have the best. We're fortunate because we have that understanding but even with that understanding it is really difficult because of the forces at work. We think that God will give us the happiness we want. It never works.

Guruji was very practical and he gave us techniques for everything. He gave us an affirmation for attracting somebody. He said, "Affirm deeply after meditation: 'Heavenly Father, bless me that I choose my life companion according to Thy law of perfect soul union.'" That's in the Lessons. Continuing, he said, "Practice this affirmation for at least six months, with deep faith. If you have established a real attunement with God through meditation and continuous affirmation of this prayer request, you will marry a suitable companion; or, if you have been drawn toward one who is fundamentally inharmonious, the Divine Father will bring about circumstances that will prevent your making a wrong marriage." Guruji was very practical, like a scientist.

Brother Bhaktananda would always go over this in his young adult classes that Br. Martin attended at the Hollywood Temple. Brother was so practical and down to earth. Br. Martin read the following from some of his notes from those classes: "The fear of never getting married, thinking one can never get married, will repel a partner." That has to be gotten out of our consciousness. It's a fear and fear has a self-fulfilling prophecy. "Relax and be cheerful and lead a spiritual life. Happiness is here whenever you want it. We can be happy with ourselves and that is what it's intended to be. You have to perfect yourself first before you can attract a perfect companion; this is the first thing you must realize.

If we're always trying to fill the hole in us with somebody else, that's really not good because then we get two holes instead of one. We have to perfect ourselves and then we will attract somebody suitable

and right for us, too. "Look for practical qualities in a person. Companies investigate background and character references and so should we. Don't be impractical when looking upon a person, look at them objectively. Put on rose colored glasses after the marriage, not before." Be very critical before marriage because things don't get better; things get worse after marriage. It is just the way it is.

"It doesn't have to be love at first sight. True love grows. Focus on friendship and compatibility." Friendship is always the greatest thing. When you're friends with somebody that does lead to a beautiful life. "The relationships," Guruji said, "that exist between friends is the grandest of human loves. Friendly love is pure because it is without compulsion. One really chooses to love his friends. He is not bound by instinct. The love that manifests between friendship can exist between man and woman, woman and woman, man and man -- any relationship. Love gives without expecting anything in return. I never think of anyone in terms of what he can do for me and I never profess love for someone because he has done something for me. If I didn't actually feel love, I wouldn't pretend to give it and since I feel it, I give it. I learned this from my Master. There may be some who do not feel friendly toward me but I am a friend to all, including my enemies, for in my heart I have no enemies."

That's it! Is that the kind of person who is going to worry about finding somebody? No way! It's a whole different way to think about love rather than some romantic thing that is a bow and arrow. It is how we behave ourselves. To be a friend to others usually is a conditional thing. We can be a lover of people, of humanity, by our will, by determining to give.

"Love cannot be had by asking. It comes only as a gift from the heart of another. Be certain of your feeling before you say to anyone, 'I love you.' Once you give your love it must be forever, not because you want to be near that person but because you want perfection for that soul. To wish perfection for a loved one and to feel pure joy in thinking of that soul is divine love and that is the love of true friendship."

Brother Bhaktananda also said to keep busy...read Master's books and the lives of saints, visit friends and acquaintances, meditate together, chant, serve at the Temple, usher, Sunday School, choir, lay disciple committees... It's a wonderful community here. That's how we can meet people. Keep busy and we won't feel so lonely. The number one rule for living the single life is to stay busy.

If one is married it can be just as lonely or even more so because we want God and that will not to be filled by another person. Loneliness is always going to be there, in a sense, for someone who is seeking God. It is a thing we can use. "Divine Mother, I want you." Make God number one in life. We need to remember that all the time. "Say all day to God, 'I love you, Lord.' it is the highest thing we can say. If we put it off we suffer because we'll be making mistakes."

Paramahansaji said, "At it's most idealistic conjugal love can be one of the greatest expressions of human love. Jesus implied this when he said, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife.' When a man and woman genuinely and purely love one another there is complete harmony between them in body, mind and soul. The conjugal love is tricky and most people leave this

world with an unsatisfied heart. They have not sought marital love in the right way. Attracted mostly by pleasing appearance, they look for their soul mate in a graveyard of beautiful, nicely dressed forms, unmindful that a devil may be housed within," From Guruji colorful writing.

Question: "As a young adult of twenty-five, as I'm sure everyone else on planet earth is, I'm experiencing sensual urges. My question is: Is there a place for love and sensuality in spirituality? When I do partake in such things I find my mind is telling me that I'm going to hell and such. Can you elaborate?"

Answer: Yes, there is a place for love and sensuality on the spiritual path. We are human beings. Self-Realization Fellowship [SRF] does not teach people to be monks and nuns. The teaching is balanced...moderation, self-control...using the force in its proper way. Then we're happy.

Br. Martin shared one of his earliest memories when he was about five years old, a little kid. He'd been thinking and wondering about God. Maybe from memories of the astral world or whatever. His mother would read him stories and this one time it was a story about God. He asked if she had a picture of Him because he wanted to see who this Guy is. She said, "Yes, there's a picture right here of God," and she pointed it out to him. He was satisfied. Now he doesn't know whether she misunderstood him because the picture was of a policeman. As a youngster he had that image in his mind for a long time that God was a cop and it was the worst possible thing. It's kind of symbolic because that's what we grow up with...that God is a judge. So when we have sensual urges and are on the spiritual path we're suppose to control the senses and control sex and then what. If we aren't able to at all times, we feel like terrible, terrible people.

God is not a judge. Guruji said, "The Divine Spirit is not a tyrant. He knows He has put us in this world of delusion. He knows we are in trouble. He knows of our struggles. Man only increases the inner darkness of his spiritual ignorance when he thinks of himself as a sinner. It is better for him to try and correct himself, appealing to Divine Mother for help, beholding in Her the reflection of God's infinite love and forgiveness."

Fortunately, yoga is a path that deals with these energies and that's what the sex force is. It's an energy in the nerves. There's a transmutation technique that Guruji gives in Lesson 71 that tells us how it works. Brother Anandamoy said, "If you try to fight sex you are lost. How can you fight it if you're putting your whole attention on it? The only way is transmutation. The more you dwell on God, your bad habits will gradually drop off like leaves of a tree that are not watered." So, concentrate on the path; concentrate on what we want to be.

More from Brother Bhaktananda's notes: "Never talk about someone else's sex life or weaknesses." Whenever something negative happens we notice in the news that people are just fascinated. It is one of the worst qualities. It's really hiding what our weaknesses are or we're feeling superior or whatever. It is not good! "Karma will come back to you full force. You'll find that you are not as strong as you think. Some aids to control vital energy are to avoid overeating, eating too many spicy foods or meat, alcohol,

tobacco, exercise and keep busy, seek company, avoid being in the company of worldly minded individuals.”

Be patient. It takes a lot of work. Transmutation creates a magnet that draws the energy in and creates new pathways for that energy but it takes time. Be patient and love God. That is the most important thing and talk to Master about anything.

Questions: “Okay, the big one! Master says God wants our love. Why does God need our love? If God’s perfect, why does He need our love? Why is that?”

Answer: This is a big and interesting question. Gurujī addressed that and said that God set up creation so that He needed our love. Interesting, isn’t it? He probably set it up that way so it would be so interesting. If He’d just set it up at random there wouldn’t be any interaction that He could have. But if He really needed something from us, it would be much more interesting.

Gurujī wrote: “I asked God why He made this creation. ‘Was it necessary for You?’ He answered, ‘No, but I had no one to share My joy.’ And so He became the Creator, but with one condition: He would impose on Himself the same yearning and seeking that He imposes on His creatures. God says, ‘I have imposed the same difficulty on Myself as on My children. As they are not finding fulfillment, so have I not found what I want.’ And what is God longing for? Our love. Our attention. He has made it very difficult for Himself, because He gave man free will to seek Him or reject Him. He says, ‘I am pursuing every heart, waiting for My children to spurn My creation and turn toward Me.’ What a grand thought, to realize that He has imposed on Himself the same exile that He has imposed on us. That God is seeking something too—our love.”

This is a great drama of love. It is so powerful that God even denied Himself that fulfillment. Beyond creation He’s perfect; in creation He is playing this drama. He is yearning for us, just as we are yearning for Him, although not knowing it, we are seeking in all the wrong places. That’s the problem. God loves us having problems in our lives because he set it up so that the rest are dead ends. That’s the cause of all our frustration. It’s like “The Hound of Heaven.” God is pursuing us saying: “All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.”

C. S. Lewis, the Christian philosopher, wrote one of the most amazing things about God’s love. He was basically saying that if we want God’s love, we’ve got it...be careful what we wish for. “Of all powers he forgives most, but he condones least: he is pleased with little, but demands all.

... In awful and surprising truth, we are objects of His love. You asked for a loving God: you have one. The great spirit you so lightly invoked, the 'lord of terrible aspect', is present: not a senile benevolence that drowsily wishes you to be happy in your own way, not the cold philanthropy of a conscientious magistrate, nor the care of a host who feels responsible for the comfort of his guests, but the consuming fire Himself, the Love that made the worlds, persistent as the artist's love for his work and despotic as a man's love for a dog, provident and venerable as a father's love for a child, jealous, inexorable, exacting as love between the sexes.

“And though our feelings come and go, His love for us does not. It is not wearied by our sins or our indifference; and, therefore, it is quite relentless in its determination that we shall be cured of those sins, at whatever cost to us, at whatever cost to Him. It is certainly a burden of glory not only beyond our deserts but also, except in rare moments of grace, beyond our desiring.”

It is pretty incredible! We can forget Divine Mother. We can forget God. We can try to go our own way; it will never happen. God’s love is more than we can imagine. “God will not tell you that you should desire Him above else,” Guruji said, “Because He wants your love to be freely given, without prompting. That is the whole secret in this game of the universe. He who created us yearns for our love. He wants us to give it spontaneously, without His asking. Our love is the one thing that God does not possess unless we choose to bestow it. So you see, even the Lord has something to attain and that is our love. We shall never be happy until we give it.”

Br. Martin went on to say that he worked in the Editorial Department of SRF for many years while living on Mt. Washington before coming to the Lake Shrine. They produce the books and when they get them finished they’d show them to Brother Anandamoy because they always like to see him. He’d say: “Oh, another book! You’ve got enough here already.” He was always trying to meditate and would say to forget about it because they didn’t need more information, which is true but they had Guruji’s teaching to get out, which they were doing. Then in the 90s the little books were printed for the general public as spiritualities became very popular. The idea was to put this little books up on the front counters in bookstores. One of them was “Inner Peace” and another was on prayer.

Then there was one on God by Sri Daya Mata; it was on thoughts of cultivating a relationship with God from her satsangas. That’s all she talked about...talk to God, cultivate your relationship with God. A quote was put on each page. It is called “Enter the Quiet Heart.” When Brother Anandamoy was shown this book he said, “This is fantastic!” He loved it! He announced it; telling devotees to read this book every day because this is the aspect that is needed. That is, talk to Divine Mother. Ultimately, love God.

Br. Martin was working on that book and he had to come up with a title for it. One of Daya Ma’s quotes in which she said was: “Devotion is the easy path. Anyone requiring an easy path to God should concentrate on that.” So he proposed that for the title and everyone said, “No way! It is not easy at all,” which is true. It is simple but it is not easy. It is hard but it can be easy just to talk to Master; just to love God. That’s is all we’re here for. If we do that and Kriya Yoga, it works like mathematics. It cannot fail.

Question: “In meditation, after Kriya, I sit in Aum asking only for God to give me the intuitive perception to carry out not my will but ‘Thy will be done.’ I get answers but how do I tell the difference between perceiving the response from God and the voice of my own ego?”

Answer: After we’ve meditated and want to be guided, how do we know that we’re being guided by God? One thing is that he or she is doing it correctly. It is after meditation that we can be receptive. So that’s the first step. “Every morning and night, go into silence or deep meditation. For meditation is the only way to discriminate between truth and error,” Guruji said. “The condition of divine discrimination is

silence.

So after meditation affirm: "I will reason, will and act but guide Thou my reason will and activity to the right thing I should do." This would probably be on the safe side. Nevertheless, Br. Martin said that he remembers talking to a devotee in Richmond who was asking the same question. She kept going on asking how she'd know for sure that she was doing the right thing. He'd say something and she'd say, "Yeah but, how do I know for sure?" Then again, "How do I know for sure." Finally, Br. Martin told her that we don't know for sure; there are no guarantees.

Then he realized that that was not the point. If we are wanting to do the divine will, that is doing the divine will. All Divine Mother wants us to do is to want to do the right thing. The rest is window dressing. The details are up to Divine Mother. If we're motivated to do the right thing, don't worry so much about how we know to go over there. We'll be guided. Wanting to do God's will is God's will and Gurujī said that if we're sincere and make a misstep, it will be righted by the Lord's omniscient judgement.

Plus, maybe, Divine Mother will guide us to make a mistake in order for us to learn something. Our life doesn't have to proceed perfectly. It's been said that even Master stumbled in the world as God wanted him to because this is not a perfect place. We learn by making missteps. We do something that turns out to be the wrong thing and we learn from that experience. That's how we get wisdom. The key is to be sincere.

The scientific way to live, Gurujī said, "is to go within yourself and ask yourself whether you are doing right or wrong. Be absolutely sincere with yourself. If you are sincere with yourself, you are unlikely to go wrong and even if you do, you will be quickly able to correct yourself." But still, sincerity is a loaded word. It is so tricky because the ego wants to do whatever it wants to do and Divine Mother loves us so much that she's given us this free will to do anything we want, including not to seek Her. So we're always candidates to go off track somewhere and think that's what God wants us to do; we just know it. We know in our hearts.

Ma said once, "The time you're most sure on the path, you can be in the greatest delusion." So sincerity isn't enough. There is another quality that is important and that is obedience. This may sound strange to you because obedience is a vow that the monastics take but that we have obedience, too. Whatever we have to do...like taking out the trash, washing the dishes, taking care of the kids, be nice to the ex-wife...that's obedience. Right? It's stuff we try to weasel out of all the time. Okay, that keeps us on the right side of the law. Then we know we can be on the safe side.

Many, many years ago, during Brother Turiyananda's time, one of Br. Martin's friends started serving at the Lake Shrine. When he showed up he asked: "How can I help?" Brother Turiyananda said: "Take this wheelbarrow and go up to the top of the hill. Unload it, come back down and do it again." So he did, although, finding it really hard but he felt such joy in his heart because he knew he was not doing it for himself. "I'm so doing this for God because it's so hard." When we go through our lives facing these difficulties that we have and if we're doing our duty, we can know that we are doing God's will, pleasing

God.

Continuing the story, Br. Martin said this individual's petty ego was happy because he was getting the hard training that he wanted. He entered the ashram, thinking he'd get this hard training. He was in the postulant ashram with Brother Premamoy, the Postulant House Brother. Brother was giving everybody the hard training but not him. He was frustrated and finally he asked Brother: "Why aren't you giving it to me?" Brother's reply: "You're getting it by not getting it."

Br. Martin thought it was so cool because it's exactly the way it works. Whatever it is, it's perfect! If we're getting training we don't want training; if we're not getting training, we want it. Just be happy with the way it is because it's perfect but we can't because we're human and don't think we're not doing God's will. We are doing God's will everyday when we wake up and do what we have to do whether we like it or not. Gurujii had to go back, finish high school and stay with his family instead of being with his Guru. How bad is that? But he did it! No problem! He didn't want to do it because he had to go back and forth every day but he faced up to that.

That is so helpful and that is why others are so great on the spiritual path. They keep us in line. It's a really solitary path and it can be dangerous. Even the monastic path that is followed is very much constrained by the people. Br. Martin remembers people talking about Brother Premamoy, who was a mountain climber, and how he said that the mountains saved his life. Br. Martin thought that it was because he'd had all these positive experiences while mountain climbing but Brother Premamoy went on to explain that what happened was as an aristocratic guy he was terribly spoiled. He just did things his own way and he learnt to climb mountains in solitude.

After he started climbing with others he learnt that others were depending on him. So it was very important for him to be in top physical shape because other people's lives were depending on him. He would climb underneath dining room tables to practice climbing; he'd wake up at 3 am and jump into an ice cold bath; he'd do all these things to overcome the body. But he did these things, not for self-mastery, not to feed his ego so he could say he was this great yogi or whatever; he did it for other people. That was his motivation. Who are these people? God is other people. When we do that then there is nothing more; then it is God's will. "Doing the right thing, he said, "is doing what you were asked to do."

Brother Bhaktananda said, "God will is first of all is that we lead the spiritual life." That is God's will. That's all. Not that we do something world shaking, which is what we all want to do. But if we seek God we may end up doing something world shaking and we won't even know it.

Question: "I was told that performing the SRF Energization Exercises in the Lake Shrine gardens is not allowed. Is this true and if so, why not?"

Answer: Apparently, it's probably because we're in Santa Monica and because they've had people that would do Ti Quon Do, Ti Chi and Hatha Yoga classes and it became sort of like a new-age gymnasium at

the Lake instead of a meditative sanctuary. Br. Martin explained because of that they had to say no exercises...let's keep it down. Human nature can be funny. We get into our things and then we wreck it so we have to have rules. Guruji said: "I don't want rules but I see they are necessary because they just are!"

"To define love," Guruji said, "is very difficult for the same reason that words cannot fully describe the flavor of an orange. You have to taste the fruit to know it's flavor. So with love. All of you have tasted love in some form in your hearts; therefore you know a little about what it is. But you've not understood how to develop love, how to purify and expand it into divine love. The only way I can describe real love to you is to tell you it's effect. If you could even feel only a particle of divine love, so great would be your joy--so overwhelming--you could not contain it. The greatest love you can experience is in communion with God in meditation. The love between the soul and Spirit is the perfect love, the love you are seeking. When you meditate love grows. Millions of thrills pass through your heart. If you learn to control sex attraction and attachment to human beings and if you strive to love all and to meditate more deeply, there will come into your life such love that you never dreamed possible."

Br. Martin said that his first year in the ashram was such a struggle. He'd be working in the fields and he'd come in, sit down for the noon meditation ready to fall asleep. He'd look at the altar and asked: "Is anybody was out there? Help!" He remembers that he was looking at the pictures and that he did a double take because one of them was just like bursting out. There was this light coming out of the picture. He felt so much love coming from the picture of Bhagavan Krishna, who was just looking at him conveying that it doesn't matter; that He was there for him and loved him.

Lord Krishna didn't care what Br. Martin was going through, he just loved him. It was so beautiful and what was amazing to him was that Lord Krishna, of all the Gurus, was the one he was the least interested in. He'd never had any feelings for him. "It was like outer space!" It was a different culture but the thought struck him: "Wow! They are seeking us; we are not seeking Them." We don't know. We don't know with which one of these gurus we can have a special connection with us. It's probably the last one we think but it doesn't matter. They are after us; They are going to protect us, regardless. They prefer that we don't know Them; that we are not aware of Their attachment because human love is stifling; it's not humbling. Then at the end we can pull the shade and see what it's all about. That is what's waiting for us.

"So why spend all your time pursuing temporary human love? Guruji wrote. Conjugal, familial, fraternal—all forms of human love have blind alleys. Divine love is the only perfect love. It is God who is playing hide-and-seek in the corridors of hearts, that perchance behind lesser human loves you may find His all-satisfying love.

"Therefore love God, not for His gifts, but because He is your own, and because He made you in His image; and you will find Him. If you meditate deeply, a love will come over you such as no human tongue can describe; you will know His divine love, and you will be able to give that pure love to others. "True love is divine, and divine love is joy. The more you meditate, seeking God with a burning desire, the more you will feel that love in your heart. Then you will know that love is joy, and joy is God."